

SKYLARK - OX over Cuba

4 May 1964

W heelon recommended against use of A-12 because of current status of the aircraft and its equipment, i.e. lack of proven ~~zzzz~~ reliability and of adequate flt test and training experience. Max effort will be continued to attain ~~xxxx~~ "emergency" A-12 overflt capability at earliest possible date -- 90 to 180 days.

At meeting of JCS he reiterated that we stood to lose more by compromising the OX over Cuba than we did by compromising [redacted] about which Gen. Taylor and others seemed quite anxious to preserve at all costs.

Gen Taylor disagreed with him re use of OX over Cuba.

McNamara stated that he did not wish to compromise OX over the USSR. However he did not want to preclude the use of OX in non-Soviet overflights. He endorsed Wheelon's point of view that OX should not be compromised by repeated runs over Cuba at its present low level of reliability.

Wheelon indicated in his write-up his low opinion of Steakley's claims for SAC U-2 pilots to know when SA-2s were launched at them; Steakley was subsequently pinned down to admitting that they would tell from visual sighting [redacted]

Sept 1964 - report on effort to achieve Mach 2.8 capability for Cuban overflights by early November. Objective to get 4 A-12s modified and retrofitted for 2.8 capability by 15 Sept - flight tested - pilots (5) checked out by 1 Oct. Up to 5 Nov conduct simulated opnl sorties insuring opnl capability.

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